3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

working the soil. It tends, however, to discourage attempts to improve gardening technics and it also tends to keep the population at subsistence level. Instead of devising ways of acquiring a surplus of food, by means of production or trade, to be fermented and stored against drought or hurricane, the natives feel they need not bother since the government will come to their aid with rice and flour in case of hurricane or famine. Hence the chief administrative problem regarding the land in southern Lau is how to stimulate interest and initiative in cultivating the soil. This problem will be discussed in the next section and in Chapter VII.

In parts of Fiji desirable for settlement, the government policy of protection of native lands has made possible the development of a class of native landlords who live idly off the rents from their lands. It has also had a marked effect on the economic development of the colony, for many native owners of commercially valuable land refuse to lease any of their holdings, even though they actually use but a small part for their gardens or plantations. The difficulties of acquiring land for settlement have been so great that they have actually discouraged or prevented settlement.

The deadlock over land in Fiji has been the serious concern of the administration for many years. In an attempt to meet the problem the great council of chiefs, which met in 1936, passed the following resolution: "That in the opinion of this Council it is to the best interests of the native race that all lands (including leases) not required for the maintenance of the Fijian owners be opened for settlement; that to further this end a committee be appointed to inquire into and determine the amount of land needed for the proper development by the native owners; and that all land (including leases) not so required be handed over to the government to lease on behalf of the Fijians."[33]

The acceptance of this recommendation by the legislative

[33] *Annual Report*, Fiji, 1936, p. 59.

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

423 council would break the land deadlock in Fiji. Whether or
471 not the measure would benefit the natives themselves would depend upon how wisely it was administered.

539 ## FOOD IS THE DAILY PROBLEM

Era vei talanoa, era nggoro
Wangga ni Mburotu ri ka sa na songgo
Uru tiko nai ndreke i na koro.
Nai mboi ni yasi kula, yasi ndromo,
Nai mboi ni mamba tu na mothelolo,
Nai mboi ni makita thuruoso
Ka laki mbotea na loma ni koro.

They were very much surprised
When we arrived in the Mburotu canoe
And anchored near the village.
The scent of red sandalwood, golden sandalwood,
The scent of *mamba* with *mothelolo*,
The scent of *makita*[34] creeps into the village
And fills it with fragrance.

From an ancient dance, Kambara.

773 THE KAMBARANS have a legend of Mburotu, the golden
261 paradise isle of the departed, inhabited by extremely beautiful maidens with light skins like the Tongans. Mburotu is covered with fragrant plants and fruit trees on which the eternally ripe fruit hangs in golden clusters waiting to be picked. As soon as one fruit is picked another appears in its place. But Mburotu is only a wish fulfillment dream in striking contrast to the harsh reality of the everyday world. Food is still the immediate and daily recurring problem on the limestone islands (including Kambara) where garden land is scarce and natural resources limited. This is rendered more acute on account of the porous nature of the soil and lack of fresh water, which makes drought a frequent menace, and on account of devastating hurricanes which cause great destruction of crops and property.

[34] *Mamba*, *mothelolo*, and *makita* are sweet smelling plants.